

**To:** Russo, Rebecca[Russo.Rebecca@epa.gov]  
**From:** Peterson, Cynthia  
**Sent:** Sat 8/15/2015 1:24:29 AM  
**Subject:** Re: Congressional inquires

Hi Rebecca. I'm sorry if I sounded impatient! I know we are all doing our best under trying situations. I was a little panicked since I am leaving first thing tomorrow and a Chris is heading up to Silverton, so I couldn't hand it off to him. When I get back, I'll be able to tell you how much we have appreciated your support over the last week. I'm sure we can work it out Monday.

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 14, 2015, at 6:51 PM, Russo, Rebecca <[Russo.Rebecca@epa.gov](mailto:Russo.Rebecca@epa.gov)> wrote:

Thank you Cynthia. I know this is very stressful and confusing. I'm doing my best to get some order into it. I will be setting up a call on Monday morning with OCIR, ORC and hopefully David to work this out. I was already coordinating with Bob, and ORC review is a checkbox on my tracking sheet. I'm worried about responses having to go through ORC because of potential delays, but I'll discuss that with the group on Monday.

I hope you have a good trip back and get some recovery time in. I can't imagine how difficult this has been for you. Please take good care.

Rebecca

Rebecca A. Russo

Region 8 Congressional and Intergovernmental Liaison

Office: 303-312-6757

Cell: Personal Phone/Ex. 6

**From:** Peterson, Cynthia  
**Sent:** Friday, August 14, 2015 5:30 PM  
**To:** Russo, Rebecca; Smith, Paula; StClair, Christie; Mylott, Richard  
**Cc:** Acevedo, Janie; Bohan, Suzanne; Stavnes, Sandra; Distefano, Nichole; Levine, Carolyn  
**Subject:** RE: Congressional inquires

I don't think we anticipated the nature of the questions we would be getting. I'm working with folks here, and we'll get back to you.

Cynthia Peterson

Community Involvement Coordinator

Public Affairs and Community Involvement

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region VIII

1595 Wynkoop St. (8OC-PAI)

Denver, CO 80202-1129

303-312-6879 -- direct dial

**From:** Russo, Rebecca

**Sent:** Friday, August 14, 2015 5:17 PM

**To:** Peterson, Cynthia; Smith, Paula; StClair, Christie; Mylott, Richard

**Cc:** Acevedo, Janie; Bohan, Suzanne; Stavnes, Sandra; Distefano, Nichole; Levine, Carolyn

**Subject:** FW: Congressional inquires

If I misinterpreted Melissa's email below saying that Janie would helping to route the congressional request and getting answers, please let me know.

Rebecca A. Russo

Region 8 Congressional and Intergovernmental Liaison

Office: 303-312-6757

Cell: Personal Phone/Ex. 6

**From:** Harrison, Melissa  
**Sent:** Friday, August 14, 2015 8:58 AM  
**To:** Purchia, Liz; StClair, Christie  
**Cc:** Russo, Rebecca; Acevedo, Janie  
**Subject:** Re: Congressional inquires

Janie will be the lead PIO in Durango helping to route the requests and getting answers. Please work with her directly on this project. Thanks!

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**From:** Purchia, Liz  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2015 8:12 PM  
**To:** StClair, Christie  
**Cc:** Harrison, Melissa  
**Subject:** FW: Congressional inquires

**From:** Distefano, Nichole  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2015 8:12 PM  
**To:** Purchia, Liz  
**Subject:** Re: Congressional inquires

This is the process EOC told us to use. Specifically said all R8 specific inquiries should be routed through EOC and Chris Ruhl.

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 13, 2015, at 7:37 PM, Purchia, Liz <[Purchia.Liz@epa.gov](mailto:Purchia.Liz@epa.gov)> wrote:

**From:** StClair, Christie  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2015 7:37 PM  
**To:** EOC Public Information  
**Cc:** Harrison, Melissa; Purchia, Liz

**Subject:** Fwd: Congressional inquires

Hello Team EOC,

A request has come in for the JIC PIOs to handle congressional inquiries.

We are not in a position to do that. And our PIOs don't feel comfortable in that role.

Once we finalize the q and a's and have them approved, we can definitely share them with OCR. But beyond that we'd need an OCR rep added to the JIC.

Make sense?

Thanks,

Christie

**Christie St. Clair**

Office of Public Affairs

Environmental Protection Agency

o: 202-564-2880

m: 202-768-5780

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Acevedo, Janie" <[Acevedo.Janie@epa.gov](mailto:Acevedo.Janie@epa.gov)>  
**Date:** August 13, 2015 at 5:21:26 PM MDT  
**To:** "StClair, Christie" <[StClair.Christie@epa.gov](mailto:StClair.Christie@epa.gov)>, "Harrison, Melissa" <[Harrison.Melissa@epa.gov](mailto:Harrison.Melissa@epa.gov)>  
**Subject:** Congressional inquires

Attached are all 3 of the inquires in one file that are pending that we discussed.

**From:** Ruhl, Christopher  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2015 5:24 PM  
**To:** Harrison, Melissa; Acevedo, Janie  
**Subject:** Fwd: Congressional inquiries re: prior work at mine

Another

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Levine, Carolyn" <[Levine.Carolyn@epa.gov](mailto:Levine.Carolyn@epa.gov)>  
**To:** "Ruhl, Christopher" <[Ruhl.Christopher@epa.gov](mailto:Ruhl.Christopher@epa.gov)>  
**Subject:** Fw: Congressional inquiries re: prior work at mine

hi Chris,

Josh said you might be able to help with this (and next) email. Let me know if I should direct this to someone else.

thanks,

Carolyn

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Carolyn Levine  
Office of Congressional Affairs  
U.S. EPA  
(202) 564-1859  
[levine.carolyn@epa.gov](mailto:levine.carolyn@epa.gov)

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From: Levine, Carolyn  
Sent: Thursday, August 13, 2015 3:33 PM  
To: EOC\_Manager;; EOC\_Deputy\_Manager,  
Subject: Congressional inquiries re: prior work at mine

Below are 2 questions from Chairman Inhofe's staff regarding prior work at the Red and Bonita mine. Please let me know who can assist with responding, thanks.

1. According to a March 2013 Pollution Report for the Red and Bonita mine (excerpt below), EPA did work to investigate and control the hydrologic pressure at Red and Bonita before beginning work. What similar actions were taken or planned at Gold King? There was a concern about hydraulic pressure at Red and Bonita.

“In 2010 EPA also initiated an investigation to determine the extent of blockage in the Red and Bonita adit. As part of that effort, a bore hole was drilled approximately 30 feet beyond the face of the hillside slope and adit opening, and it was determined to drill into the void of the adit/tunnel. At that location a monitoring well, used to monitor the impounded water within the adit, was installed, to determine if the adit blockage was under hydraulic pressure from a possible mine pool. This was necessary to determine before the removal of the collapsed portal in 2011. It was necessary to remove the blockage to allow future entry to assess the hydrogeologic and geotechnical

conditions in the adit. In addition, a future blowout of the blockage was a potential risk if the debris had not been removed. During removal of the collapsed rock debris at the portal a large volume of water was pumped (multiple times) from the adit in order to control both the pressure against the soil/rock mass and to prevent the turbid water from releasing. All disturbed water pumped during portal excavation and later during mine entry activities received a flocculent and/or was filtered prior to release into Cement Creek. A new mine portal was installed in October 2011.”

2. Re: the attached article from High Country News, was a bore hole drilled at Gold King like the one described below at Red and Bonita? Or did EPA just proceed to remove the blockage at the portal?

“And they admit that before tinkering with the mine, they should have taken better steps to mitigate a possible disaster, such as drilling into the mine from the top to assess the situation without the danger of busting the dam.”

Thank you,

Carolyn

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Carolyn Levine

Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations

U.S. EPA

(202) 564-1859

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<Congressional Inquires.docx>